# GST Registration Online: Apply for Your GST Number in India

Running a business in India without GST registration when you're supposed to have it is honestly one of the easiest ways to get into legal trouble. And yet, a lot of business owners either delay it, don't fully understand when it applies to them, or get confused by the process.

I've seen people spend weeks going back and forth with the portal over a simple document mismatch that could've been avoided in 10 minutes. If you want to skip that entire ordeal, the team at legaldev.in handles the full GST registration process for you — documents, submission, officer follow-ups, everything. But if you'd rather, do it yourself, keep reading and I'll walk you through exactly what's involved.

## So, What Even Is GST Registration?

When your business crosses a certain income threshold — or falls into specific categories — you're legally required to register under the Goods and Services Tax system. Once you do, the government assigns you a 15-digit number called a GSTIN (GST Identification Number). Think of it as your business's tax identity.

That number is tied to your PAN, includes your state code, and stays with your business as long as you're active. Once you have it, you can legally charge GST on your bills, recover the GST you've paid on purchases (called Input Tax Credit), and sell across state borders without restrictions.

The whole process happens on the GST portal — gst.gov.in. No government office visits, no queues. Just paperwork, uploads, and a bit of patience.

## Do You Actually Need to Register? Here's How to Tell

This is where most people get confused. The rule isn't just about how much you earn — it's also about what you do and how you sell. Here's the breakdown:

| Category | Threshold Limit | Who This Covers |
|---|---|---|
| Goods – Normal States | ₹40 Lakhs/year | Manufacturers and traders of goods |
| Services – Normal States | ₹20 Lakhs/year | Service providers across India |
| Special Category States | ₹10 Lakhs/year | Northeastern states, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, J&K |
| E-commerce Sellers & Operators | No limit — register regardless | Anyone selling through Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho, etc. |

| Category | Threshold Limit | Who This Covers |
|---|---|---|
| Inter-State Suppliers | No limit — register regardless | Anyone supplying goods/services across state borders |
| Casual Taxable Persons | No limit — register regardless | Businesses without a fixed office in a particular state |

And beyond turnover, you also need to register if any of the following apply to you:

- You sell goods or services to customers in another state — even one transaction counts
- You sell on platforms like Amazon or Flipkart — the ₹40 lakh exemption doesn't apply here
- You pay GST under the reverse charge mechanism (RCM)
- You're an input service distributor passing credit to your branches
- You're a non-resident person supplying goods or services in India
- You need to deduct TDS or collect TCS under the GST rules
- You want to register voluntarily — even if you're below the threshold

## 9 Specific Situations Where Registration Is Compulsory — No Exceptions

Even if your revenue is nowhere near the threshold, these nine situations make GST registration compulsory. No wiggle room:

- Annual turnover goes above ₹40 lakhs for goods, or ₹20 lakhs for services
- You supply goods or services to another state — just one cross-border transaction triggers this
- You're an e-commerce operator or seller on any online marketplace
- You operate as a Casual Taxable Person — someone who does business occasionally in a state where they don't have a permanent setup
- You're a foreign (non-resident) person supplying goods or services within India
- Your business pays GST under the reverse charge mechanism
- You're a government body or notified entity that must deduct TDS or collect TCS
- You distribute input tax credit across branches as an Input Service Distributor
- You're an SEZ developer or unit involved in supply of goods or services

Not sure which category you fall under? A quick call with the legaldev.in team can clear this up in minutes — they deal with these eligibility questions daily.

## Which Type of GST Registration Should You Go For?

### Regular GST Registration

This is the default option for most businesses. Your turnover crosses the threshold, you register as a regular taxpayer, file returns every month or quarter, and claim input tax credit on everything you buy for the business. If you're selling across states, this is the one.

### Composition Scheme

Designed for small businesses with turnover up to ₹1.5 crore (₹75 lakhs for service providers). Instead of dealing with every invoice's GST calculation, you just pay a flat percentage on your total revenue and file quarterly. The catch — you can't charge GST from customers or claim ITC. Works well if you mostly sell to end consumers and want to keep compliance simple.

### Casual Taxable Person Registration

If you participate in trade fairs, exhibitions, or do seasonal business in states where you don't have a permanent office — this is for you. It's a temporary registration, valid for up to 90 days (extendable), and you need to deposit an estimate of your expected tax liability upfront before the registration kicks in.

## Documents You'll Need — Based on Your Business Type

The document list varies depending on your business structure. Here's what's typically required:

| Business Type | Documents Required |
|---|---|
| Sole Proprietorship / Individual | PAN Card, Aadhaar Card, Photograph, Bank Account Details, Business Address Proof |
| Partnership Firm / LLP | Partnership Deed or LLP Agreement, PAN of Partners, Aadhaar of Authorized Signatory, Bank Statement, Address Proof |
| Private / Public Limited Company | Certificate of Incorporation, MoA & AoA, Company PAN, Board Resolution, Director Details, Bank Statement |
| Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) | PAN of HUF, Karta's Aadhaar, Karta's Photograph, Bank Account Details, Address Proof |
| Trust / Society / Club | Trust Deed or Registration Certificate, Trust PAN, |

| Business Type | Documents Required |
|---|---|
| | Authorized Person's Aadhaar, Bank Details |
| Government Department / PSU | Government Order or Certificate, PAN, Authorized Signatory's Aadhaar, Address Proof |

On top of these, everyone needs:

- Bank proof — a cancelled cheque or statement clearly showing your IFSC code
- Address proof for your business — electricity bill, rent agreement, or an NOC from the property owner if you don't own the space
- A Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) — compulsory for companies and LLPs
- Authorization — a board resolution or letter of authorization naming the person signing the application

Not sure if your documents are in order before you submit? legaldev.in offers a document review — they'll check everything upfront so you don't get a query notice halfway through the process.

## Step-by-Step: How to Actually Apply Online

Go to gst.gov.in and follow these steps:

1. Click 'Register Now' under the Taxpayers section on the homepage.
2. Fill Part A of Form REG-01 — your PAN, mobile number, and email address. Verify via OTP. You'll get a Temporary Reference Number (TRN).
3. Log in with your TRN and complete Part B — this is where you fill in your full business details, address, bank account, and nature of operations.
4. Upload all required documents — PAN, Aadhaar, address proof, bank details. Make sure everything is legible and matches exactly.
5. Submit the application using either a Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) or Aadhaar-based e-sign.
6. You'll immediately get an Application Reference Number (ARN). Save it — this is how you track your application.
7. A GST officer will review your application within 3 working days. This is where most delays happen. If your address proof has a spelling that doesn't match your PAN records — even a small one — expect a query that sets you back a week. Worth checking before you submit.
8. Once the officer is satisfied, your GSTIN and registration certificate are issued within 7 working days.

If this still feels like a lot to manage while running your business, legaldev.in offers assisted GST registration where they handle the entire process — submission, document coordination, and officer communication — on your behalf.

## What Does GST Registration Cost? (Spoiler: Nothing)

A lot of people assume there's some government processing fee. There isn't. Registering under GST is completely free.

| Category | Threshold Limit | Government Fee |
|---|---|---|
| Goods – Normal States | ₹40 Lakhs/year | Zero |
| Services – Normal States | ₹20 Lakhs/year | Zero |
| Special Category States | ₹10 Lakhs/year | Zero |
| Composition Scheme | Up to ₹1.5 Crore | Zero |
| Casual Taxable Person | No threshold | Advance tax deposit required (not a fee) |
| Voluntary Registration | Below threshold | Zero |

If you use a professional service to handle this, their charges are separate — the government isn't involved in that. Also, if you've paid excess GST or have accumulated unused input tax credit, you may be eligible for a GST Refund.

## Late Fees and Penalties — Numbers You Should Actually Know

This is the part nobody wants to deal with, but it's worth knowing before you miss a deadline:

| Offence | Penalty | Maximum Limit |
|---|---|---|
| Late return filing (with tax due) | ₹50/day (₹25 CGST + ₹25 SGST) | ₹5,000 |
| Late return filing (NIL return) | ₹20/day (₹10 CGST + ₹10 SGST) | ₹500 |
| Annual Return (GSTR-9) not filed | ₹200/day (₹100 CGST + ₹100 SGST) | 0.25% of state turnover |
| Tax evasion or fraud | 100% of tax due (minimum ₹10,000) | No upper limit |

| Offence | Penalty | Maximum Limit |
|---|---|---|
| Genuine errors or short payment | 10% of tax due (minimum ₹10,000) | No upper limit |
| GSTR-10 filed late | ₹200/day (₹100 CGST + ₹100 SGST) | ₹10,000 |

These penalties add up faster than most people expect. If you've already missed a filing or received a notice, the legaldev.in team handles GST notice responses and penalty resolution — worth reaching out before it compounds further.

## Need to Change Something After Registration? Here's the Amendment Process

Whether your business name changed, you added a partner, or just updated your email — the GST portal lets you amend your registration. The process depends on what you're changing:

| Field Type | Examples | Officer Approval? | Turnaround |
|---|---|---|---|
| Core Fields | Legal name, principal place of business, adding or removing partners/directors | Yes — required | Up to 15 working days |
| Non-Core Fields | Mobile number, email, bank account, additional business location | No — instant | Immediate |

To apply: log into gst.gov.in → Services → Registration → Amendment of Registration. Pick the field, make your change, attach documents if it's a core field, then submit with DSC or e-sign. Track the status using the ARN you receive.

## Cancelling Your GST Registration — When and How

Maybe your business wrapped up, or your turnover dropped below the threshold, or the structure of your business changed. You can cancel your registration yourself. Or, if you've missed too many returns, a GST officer can cancel it on their end. Here's how each scenario plays out:

| Type | Initiated By | Common Reason | Form |
|---|---|---|---|
| Voluntary Cancellation | You (the taxpayer) | Business closed, revenue too low, restructuring | GST REG-16 |

| Type | Initiated By | Common Reason | Form |
|---|---|---|---|
| Officer-Initiated Cancellation | GST Officer | Non-filing of returns, fraud, violation of GST Act | GST REG-17 |
| Revocation of Cancellation | You (the taxpayer) | Restoring cancelled registration within 90 days | GST REG-21 |

After cancellation, you must file a final return in GSTR-10 within 3 months of the cancellation order. Don't skip this — it attracts its own penalties. legaldev.in also handles GST cancellation and revocation if you need someone to manage the process cleanly.

## The Cost of Not Registering When You Should Have

This is the part people underestimate. If the department figures out you were required to register and didn't, here's what you're looking at:

| What Went Wrong | Penalty |
|---|---|
| Failed to register — and it was intentional | 100% of unpaid tax or ₹10,000, whichever is higher |
| Failed to register — genuine mistake | 10% of unpaid tax or ₹10,000, whichever is higher |
| Collected GST from customers without being registered | 100% of the amount collected + interest |
| Supplied goods or services without issuing invoices | 100% of tax due or ₹10,000, whichever is higher |
| Claimed ITC fraudulently | 100% of the ITC claimed |
| Obstructed a GST officer from doing their job | Up to ₹25,000 |
| Didn't generate a mandatory e-invoice | ₹10,000 or 100% of tax due, whichever is higher |

If your business issues invoices above ₹5 crore, e-invoicing is mandatory for every transaction. And if you export goods or services, a GST LUT (Letter of Undertaking) lets you do so without paying IGST upfront — worth knowing if you deal in exports.

## Why Registration Is Worth It — Beyond Just Compliance

Yes, GST registration is a legal requirement for many businesses. But it also comes with real, practical benefits:

- You can claim back the GST you paid on your own purchases — this is called Input Tax Credit, and it directly reduces what you owe the government
- You can legally sell to customers in any state without restrictions
- You can list and sell on e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, and Meesho — they won't let you without a GSTIN
- Your GSTIN signals legitimacy — customers and vendors take you more seriously when you're GST registered
- Banks and NBFCs often look at your GST filing history when assessing you for business loans
- Government tenders almost always require GST registration
- You can claim refunds on taxes paid on goods and services you export outside India

## Common Questions — Answered Honestly

**How long does it take to actually get my GSTIN?**

If your application is clean — documents match, no mismatches, Aadhaar verified — the officer reviews it within 3 working days and the GSTIN comes through within 7. If they raise a query (usually about an address proof that doesn't match your PAN records), add another 5-7 days minimum. The fastest route is getting someone like legaldev.in to handle it — they know exactly what officers look for and prepare the application accordingly.

**Can I start the process without a business bank account?**

Yes. The portal doesn't block you from submitting without it. You can fill in bank details after you get your GSTIN — but you have a 45-day window to update them. Don't sit on it too long.

**What happens if I registered under the wrong category?**

More common than you'd think. If you picked the Composition Scheme but later realized you want to sell cross-state or claim ITC, you'll need to cancel that registration and apply for a fresh one under the correct category. In the meanwhile, your billing gets disrupted. Save yourself the hassle — figure out which category fits your business before you apply. If you're unsure, legaldev.in can advise you on this before you submit.

**Will someone actually come to inspect my business premises?**

Not automatically. But if your Aadhaar authentication fails during registration, or your application gets flagged for risk review, a physical verification becomes likely

before approval. Keep your address proof consistent with your actual location to avoid this.

**I only sell on Amazon. Do I still need GST registration?**

Absolutely, yes. The turnover exemption doesn't apply if you're selling through an e-commerce platform. Every Amazon and Flipkart seller needs a GSTIN — the platform requires it before you can even list your first product. If you need help getting registered quickly, legaldev.in works with a lot of e-commerce sellers and can get this done without the usual back and forth.